

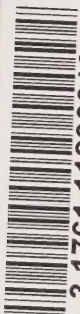


Government of Canada
Minister of State for Youth

Gouvernement du Canada
Ministre d'État à la Jeunesse

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Federal government urges Canadian business to help
solve country's high school dropout issue**

Toronto, January 23, 1992 -- In a keynote speech to business leaders at the Empire Club of Canada, the Honourable Pierre H. Cadieux, Minister of State for Youth, Fitness and Amateur Sport today launched the government's awareness campaign to inform Canadian business about the country's alarming 30 % high school dropout rate and to invite their concerted action in addressing the dropout issue.



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As Minister responsible for the national Stay-in-School initiative, Mr. Cadieux indicated that this situation has a direct impact, not only on the lives of these 100,000 young people who drop out each year, but also on the business community and the economic health of the country.

"We need your involvement, as business leaders, in the Stay-in-School initiative. This is demonstrably in your own interest. How are you otherwise going to fill job vacancies which increasingly require Grade 12 level skills when our dropout rate is stuck at 30%?" asked the Minister.

"These are times of global competitiveness," said the Minister, "and if we do not meet the test of these times, we will be left behind as a country. At stake is nothing less than the performance of our youth and the prosperity of our country."

Studies indicate that Canadian business people are not generally aware of the gravity of the high school dropout issue, or what they can do to change the situation. This business-oriented awareness campaign, which includes advertising in key business publications across the country, is intended to stimulate discussion and dialogue among the private and public sectors, who can work together under the auspices of the Stay-in-School initiative to help Canadian youth meet the challenges of the 1990's and beyond.

The campaign also offers business people concrete information about how to get directly involved in the initiative.

As part of their response to the dropout issue, the Minister encouraged Canada's business leaders and their colleagues to add a Stay-in-School message to their corporate advertising, to get directly involved in schools -- for example -- by providing up-to-date equipment, staff interchanges, mentoring and work experiences.

"An educated Canada will be a prosperous Canada. An educated Canada will also be a united Canada. By increasing the numbers of young people staying in school, we will build a more prosperous and united Canada," concluded the Minister.

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